EVALUATION OF THE SURREY COURT PROJECT: FACILITATED PLANNING MEETING

INTERIM REPORT

for

Dispute Resolution Office
Ministry of Attorney General

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is an interim evaluation report of the Surrey Court Project's Facilitated Planning Meeting, which will be referred to as the Facilitated Planning Meeting Project (FPMP) throughout this document. The FPMP is a pilot mediation project in the Ministry of Children and Family Development's South Fraser Region to shorten the time frame required to make effective decisions for children in protection cases. The methodologies for this report consisted of quantitative data extracted from the FPMP database, and interviews with 10 parents, 10 social workers, 6 lawyers, 2 judges, 5 mediators, the Court Work Supervisor and director's Counsel for MCFD. A final evaluation report in early 2003 will compare FPMP cases with a baseline sample of non-FPMP protection cases, and explore outcomes of non-resolved FPMP cases.

Project Description

The key elements of the FPMP process are:

- a Court Work Supervisor who identifies potential cases, receives referrals, attends Orientation Sessions with the social worker, and attends the Planning Meeting.
- FPMP Administrative Coordinator, who assigns a mediator and schedules all meetings
- Orientation Sessions held between the mediator and each party to determine issues, interests and logistics for the Planning Meeting.
- A Planning Meeting facilitated by the mediator, in which all parties meet to attempt to resolve key issues.

Quantitative Findings

Key quantitative findings are as follows:

- 42 cases[1] were referred to the project from five MFCD offices in the Surrey Provincial Court region. This represented approximately 31% of removal cases from May 2001 to Feb 28, 2002. Som e offices began referrals in June and others in October of 2001.
- 73% (31/42) of cases involved two or more orientation sessions, and 27% (11/42) four or five. The average combined time of the sessions was 5.2 hours.
- 93% (39/42) of cases were completed in one planning meeting. The average number of participants in planning meetings was 5.4, and the average length of combined meetings was 5.1 hours.
- 77% (32/42) of cases were completed in less than 40 days from referral. However, given natural limits on the number of cases that can be scheduled with one Court Work Supervisor, this time period is likely to extend as more cases are referred.
- in the 42 cases, 198 issues were dealt with in the planning meeting. Of these 90% (179) were resolved. Issues concerned access, behaviour and parenting, communication, residence, services/resources and return of the child. The highest resolution rate (100%) was for residence, issues; the lowest resolution rate (79%) concerned behaviour and parenting issues.
- overall 79% cases (33/42) had all issues resolved; 14% (6/42) had some issues resolved; only 7% (3/42) had no issues resolved.

[1] These 42 cases do not include 4 referrals that did not proceed because parties either did not show at the orientation meeting, and/or did not wish to participate. This category of "referred but did not proceed" will be more fully analyzed in the final evaluation report. For purposes of this report, these 4 cases are considered non-referrals.

- combined satisfaction ratings for parents, social workers, lawyers and judges concerning the following issues are indicated on a 7 point scale, where 1= very dissatisfied and 7= very satisfied:
  - speed with which appropriate parties were brought together to address issues: 5.6
  - FPMP's success in reaching appropriate outcomes: 5.9
  - opportunity FPMP affords parties to be heard: 6.2
  - respect shown by the mediator to parties: 6.8
  - ability of FPMP to determine the best interests of the child: 5.8
  - ability of the project to facilitate a family's access to necessary resources: 5.9
  - overall satisfaction with the FPMP: 6.2
- The average parent, social worker and lawyer ratings for all items were 6.2, 6.1 and 6.0 respectively.

Observations About the FPMP Process

Selected observations about the FPMP process by the mediators, Court Work Supervisor and Director's Counsel include the following:

- Although there was some evidence that mediators may be able to reduce the length of the planning meeting below the current average of 5.1 hours, it could notco me close to the 2 hours originally envisioned in the planning stages. A number of factors which affect length are described in the report.
- Although a more detailed comparative analysis of court versus FPMP time in cases will be presented in the final evaluation report, preliminary indicators are that the FPMP process is superior both in the speed of resolution of cases and in the time expended in meetings (versus court hearing time) for comparable resolution outcomes.
- The orientation sessions are critical to the success of the FPMP, allowing both parties to reframe their issues and arrive at the planning meeting more prepared and less defensive.
- The Court Work Supervisor role was praised by all parties. Several aspects that are central to this role are described in this report, the key one being that it is a collaborative rather than adversarial function.

1.0 BACKGROUND

This is an interim evaluation report of the Surrey Court Project's Facilitated Planning Meeting, which will be referred to as the Facilitated Planning Meeting Project (FPMP)throughout this document. The FPMP is a pilot project dealing with child protection cases from the Surrey Provincial Court registry. The FPMP was designed by the Dispute Resolution Office (DRO) of the Ministry of Attorney General (AG) and the Ministry of Children & Family Development (MCFD), in consultation with the Legal Services Society, Legal Services Branch (AG), Court Services Branch (AG), and the Office of the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court. Its primary objective is to shorten the time frame required to make effective decisions for children, by using a mediation process described in section 3.

Project implementation was overseen by an inter-ministry Working Group initially comprised of: Jean Macdonald (Community Services Manager, Langley), Linda Hays-Newington (Community Services Manager, Surrey), Catherine Pritchard (Team Leader, Guildford), Sheila Zeiner (Team Leader, Guildford), and Elizabeth Winkler (Team Leader, Langley). Initially Phil Schwartz represented Regional Operations, Headquarters, MCFD; however, Julia Northrup later assumed this responsibility and chaired the Working Group's meetings. Irene Robertson (Senior Policy Analyst) represented the DRO. Jackie Christofferson, Barrister and Solicitor and Director's Counsel, assisted the Working Group.

In 2001, both shortly before FPMP began and in its early stages of operation, the DRO contracted with Focus Consultants to develop an evaluation framework for FPMP. As part of this contract a sample of cases was drawn of comparable protection files which were in the court system in the period July 1, 1999 to July 30, 2000. These cases will ultimately be used in a comparison with FPMP case outcomes in the second phase of this evaluation in early 2003. In conjunction with the evaluation framework, Wenco Systems Ltd. developed a database and report system for FPMP, both for operational & evaluation purposes. It was hoped that the system would also be able to serve as a prototype for similar types of initiatives, and could be adopted by other programs if the FPMP model is applied in other court and MCFD regions.

The current contract has three components:

- review results of the data system for accuracy and utility, and make revisions as necessary.
- finalize the qualitative data survey instrument and conduct survey interviews of parties for a preliminary assessment of FPMP's activities to Feb 28,20 02.
- write an interim report on the project.
- this report contains the quantitative results from the database that can be extracted at this point, plus the results of qualitative interviews conducted in May of 2002. A second report to be conducted in the fall of 2002 or early 2003 will address results of FPMP's activities through September 2002, and will compare FPMP case results with those of the pre-FPMP baseline sample.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Data collection for this report involved two processes. The first was extraction of quantitative data from the FPMP database. The second consisted of interviews with four sets of respondents. Procedures and limitations for each process are described below.

2.1 Quantitative Data from Database

For the most part the FPMP data system has worked well. Key descriptive data from this system are reported in tables 1-12 of section 4. However the current workload of the Administrative Coordinator has not allowed for entry of all data items, especially those that involve follow-up of cases. As a consequence, there is insufficient data to report subsequent court events. It is also not possible at this stage to make comparisons between fully resolved cases and ones that were not fully resolved or with baseline cases. These data will be available in the final report in early 2003.

2.2 Interviews

Interviews were conducted with the following sets of respondents, all of whom except the judges had had direct involvement in one or more FPMP planning meetings.

- 10 parents
- 10 Social Workers
- 6 Lawyers
- 2 Judges
- 5 mediators

The questionnaire in Appendix 1 was used for the first four respondent groups; the interview theme guide in Appendix 2 was used for mediators. Exploratory interviews were also held with one MCFD's Director's Counsel and with the Court Work Supervisor. Selection of respondents was primarily based on availability, as a formal sampling procedure for these interviews was not feasible given the constrained timeframe for the preliminary report. Nonetheless, retrospective analysis of the representation within each group shown below, combined with the strongly consistent response patterns reported in Section 5, lend confidence to the results.

Parents: 10 interviewed, representing:

- 9 of 42 cases (21%)
- 10 of 75 parents or step-parents involved (13%)
- all five referring offices.

Social Workers: 10 interviewed, including 9 social workers who attended meetings and one who was a team leader. These represented:

- 9 of 26 social workers who were directly involved in meetings (35%)
- 22 of 42 cases (52%)
- 4 referring offices
- participation ranging from 1 to 6 cases each

Lawyers: 6 interviewed, representing:

- 5 of 19 Lawyers involved in cases (26%)
- 15 of 22 cases involving lawyers (68%)
- participation varying from 1 to 7 cases each

Parents, Social Workers & Lawyers together represented participation in:

- 35 of 42 cases (83%)

Mediators: 5 interviews, representing:

- 5 of 11 mediators (45%)
- 29 of 42 cases (69%)

3.0 A SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE FPMP

This section briefly describes the key elements of the FPMP.

3.1 Location

The MCFD offices participating in the project are all in the Ministry's South Fraser Region, and include:

- Guildford – cases assigned to the Child Protection (CP) or Family Services (FS) team.
- Langley – CP, FS or Youth teams.
- Surrey North – CP or FS teams.
- Newton – CP or FS teams
- Whiterock

3.2 Referral Process

In all cases removal of a child has occurred under the Child, Family & Community Services Act (CFCSA). A referral to the project may be made by a social worker on one of the participating teams, the FPMP Court Work Supervisor, a parent, the lawyer of a parent, MCFD Director's Council, or a Judge. The aim of FPMP is to make such referrals as early in the court process as possible.

3.3 Nature of Dispute

A dispute is defined as a case in which parents do not agree with the steps the Ministry wishes to take, the terms of an order or the entire order it intends to seek in court e.g. where a child will live on a temporary basis, or whether a child should stay in the Ministry's care. Alternately, the ministry may disagree with the adequacy of a family's plan to ensure a safe environment for a child.

3.4 Steps Following Referral

These are two primary steps involved in the FPMP following referral of a case.

3.4.1 Orientation Sessions

Orientation sessions are held between the mediator and social worker (including the court work supervisor) on the one hand, and parents on the other. Depending on the relationship between the parents, their sessions may be held together or separately. Sessions with other parties are possible as well. Legal counsel may attend these meetings.

The purpose is to prepare parties for the planning meeting by discussing logistics and clarifying parties interests, issues and concerns. Information relevant to the safety of the child(ren) is also exchanged. An Agreement to Participate in the planning meeting may be signed at this stage.

Orientation sessions are scheduled by the FPMP Coordinator.

3.4.2 Planning Meetings

The planning meeting is a mediated session which includes one mediator, the immediate parties (e.g. parents and social worker), and the Court Work Supervisor, and can include parents' counsel, counsel for the child(ren), Director's counsel, and other relevant parties. The original expectation was that the meeting would take about 2 hours, and that in some cases a second meeting may be necessary.

When all or some issues are agreed to, a written agreement is created and signed. In some cases this agreement becomes the basis of a consent order. If no issues are resolved, the mediator confirms that the matter will proceed to a hearing.

3.5 Comparison with Section 22 Mediations under the CFCSA

Section 22 of the CFCSA allows child protection disputes to be referred to mediation for resolution. A Child Protection Mediation Program was established in 1997. The main differences between the FPMP process and other Section 22 mediations are:

- The role of the Administrative Coordinator is unique to FPMP and provides critical, time-consuming scheduling services to mediators. In Section 22 mediations, mediators are responsible for scheduling all mediation services.
- Section 22 mediations are strictly voluntary. While participation in FPMP is also voluntary, the Court Work Supervisor systematically reviews all eligible cases for referral.
- Orientation sessions are optional in Section 22 mediation, but are an essential component in FPMP cases.
- Section 22 mediations can occur at any time when MCFD is involved with a family under the CFCSA, even before a child is removed or after a hearing. FPMP cases normally begin shortly after the court process has been initiated.
- Section 22 mediations can occur anywhere in the province, while the FPMP is restricted to the South Fraser Region offices identified in Section 3.1
- The role of the Court Work Supervisor, explored in greater detail in Sections 5 and 6, is essential to FPMP, but is not a feature of Section 22 mediations.

4.0 QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

This section presents key quantitative findings from the FPMP database.

4.1 Removals

Table I shows the origin of removals for baseline and FPMP cases for the periods defined in the sub-notes. The main purpose of presenting the baseline originating offices in this table is to ascertain whether the distribution of baseline cases from the offices is similar to that of cases referred to FPMP. Several points should be noted:

- Surrey North and Newton were added to the project after the baseline sample was drawn. The comparison between baseline and FPMP cases in the second phase of the evaluation will thus likely deal only with the Guildford, Langley and Whiterock cases.
- At present the distribution of cases from each of the first three offices is similar but by no means identical. However, this may change over the course of the next 6 months of referrals.
- Office of origin is only one of several possible bases of comparison between baseline and FPMP cases. Furthermore, baseline cases were selected using the same criteria that govern referral to FPMP, so it can be asserted that the cases are inherently comparable.

Table 1: Removals by Office

Originating Office	Baseline		Referred to FPMP		Not Referred to FPMP	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Guildford	29	46%	15	36%	25	25%
Langley	24	38%	16	38%	20	20%
Whiterock	9	14%	1	2%	5	5%
Surrey North	-		8	19%	31	31%
Newton	-		2	5%	20	20%
Total	63	100%	42	100%	101	100%

Notes: Removals for Baseline cases are for cases in the court system between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2000. The earliest removal date for these cases was in 1996. The list of removals for FPMP cases or for "Removed but not Referred to FPMP" cases was begun in May 2001 for Guildford, Langley and Whiterock, and October 2001 for Surrey North and Newton. Data is for cases with removals prior to the end of February 2002. These 42 cases do not include 4 referrals that did not proceed because parties either did not show at the orientation meetings, and/or decided not to participate. For purposes of this report, these four cases are considered non-referrals.

4.2 Referrals

Table 2 shows that overall, 31% of removals are referred to FPMP. Reasons for non-referral have not been recorded, however the following factors are considered relevant:

- case may not have been eligible, e.g. child was removed, but returned to parents, or there was no dispute between the social worker and the parent as to what steps would be taken
- parents did not agree to participate
- parents' counsel did not wish to participate
- social worker did not wish to participate

- there is a criminal charge directly related to the case, (e.g. spousal assault, child abuse)

Table 2: Referrals to FPMP As Percentage of Overall Removals, By Office

Originating Office	Total # of Removals	# of Referrals	% Referred
Guildford	40	15	38%
Langley	36	16	44%
Whiterock	6	1	17%
Surrey North	39	8	21%
Newton	22	2	9%
Total	143	42	31%

Note: The list of removals was begun in May 2001 for Guildford, Langley and Whiterock, and October 2001 for Surrey North and Newton. Data is for cases with removals prior to the end of February 2002. With regard to number of referrals, see note to Table 1.

4.3 Orientation Sessions

Table 3 shown that the principal persons involved in orientation sessions are parents, social workers and the Court Work Supervisor. In interpreting this table it is important to note two things:

1. The orientation sessions never combine social workers and parents. The usual pattern is one meeting involving both the social worker and Court Work Supervisor together, and others with parents, either together or separately, and with or without other parties such as lawyers or children.
2. The number of cases is 42. Thus in all except one case an orientation session was held with the social worker, and the Court Work Supervisor was present in all of these cases. Orientation sessions were held with at least one parent in all cases, and approximately 50% of cases involved an extra orientation session with a second parent. A lawyer was involved in an orientation session in approximately 25% of cases (9/42), as was a child (10/42).

Table 3: Participants in Orientation Sessions (June, 2001 – February 2002)

Attendee Role	# of Sessions	% of Sessions
Advocate	3	2%
Child	10	8%
Court Work Supervisor	43	35%
Foster Parent	6	5%
Interpreter / Translator	3	2%
Lawyer for Child	2	2%
Lawyer for Parent	9	7%
Other Family Member	5	4%
Parent / Step Parent	64	52%
Social Worker	41	33%

Note: Total # of sessions is 124. All percentages are therefore based on a potential total of 124.

Table 4 shows that while 73% (31/42) of the cases involved two or three orientation sessions, over a quarter of cases included four or five sessions.

Table 4: Number of Orientation Sessions Per Case

Number of Sessions Per Case	# of Sessions	% of Sessions
Two Orientation Sessions	14	33%
Three Orientation Sessions	17	40%
Four Orientation Sessions	10	24%
Five Orientation Sessions	1	2%
Total Cases	42	99%

Note: percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

The overall length in hours of the combined orientation sessions in each case is presented in Table 5. Approximately half of the cases took less than 5 hours, and half over 5 hours. The longest combination of sessions in a single case totaled 9.2 hours. The average combined time of the sessions was 5.2 hours.

Table 5: Length of Combined Orientation Sessions Per Case

Length of Combined Sessions per Case	# of Cases	% of Cases
Less than 2 Hours	1	2%
2 to 2.9 Hours	2	5%
3 to 3.9 Hours	5	12%
4 to 4.9 Hours	14	33%
5 to 5.9 Hours	6	14%
6 Hours or more	14	33%
Total Cases	42	99%

Note: Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

4.4 Planning Meetings

Table 6 shows that the vast majority of cases were completed in one planning meeting.

Table 6: Number of Planning Meetings Per Case

Number of Meetings Per Case	# of Cases	% of Cases
One Planning Meeting	39	93%
Two or More Planning Meetings	3	7%
Total Cases	42	100%

Table 7 shows that the Court Work Supervisor and a parent have been at all 45 meetings, a social worker at all but one, a lawyer for the parent has been present in two-thirds of the meetings, and other parties frequently attend. The average number of participants in the meetings has been 5.4, with approximately 20% of meetings (9/45) having 7 or more participants.

Table 7: Attendees in Planning Meetings

Participant Role	# of Meetings where at Least One Participant of this Kind was Present	% of Meetings
Advocate	6	13%
Child	4	9%
Court Work Supervisor	45	100%
Director's Counsel	8	18%
Foster Parent	3	7%
Interpreter/Translator	3	7%
Lawyer for Child	2	4%
Lawyer for Parent	31	69%
Other Family Member	5	11%
Parent / Step Parent	45	100%
Social Worker	44	98%

Note: Total # of planning meetings is 45 (for 42 cases). All percentages are therefore based on a potential total of 45.

Table 8 shows the length of the combined planning meetings per case (i.e. including 4 cases that involved two meetings). The average length of the combined meetings has been 5.1 hours; the longest has been 8.5 hours, and the shortest 2 hours.

Table 8: Length of Combined Planning Meetings Per Case

Length of Combined Meetings per Case	# of Cases	% of Cases
2 to 2.9 Hours	4	10%
3 to 3.9 Hours	7	17%
4 to 4.9 Hours	9	21%
5 to 5.9 Hours	4	10%
6 Hours or more	18	43%
Total Cases	42	101%

Note: Average length of all planning meetings reported, in hours: 5.1.
Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

Table 9 shows that 77% (32/42) of cases are completed in less than 40 days from referral. This statistic, in combination with the high degree of resolution of issues shown in Tables 10 and 11, is a strong indicator of the success of FPMP to date. However, factors discussed in section 5.1 will likely increase the time taken to schedule and complete planning meetings in the future.

Table 9: Number of Days Between Referral and Conclusion of Planning Meetings

Number of Days	# of Cases	% of Cases
1 to 10 Days	4	10%
11 to 20 Days	8	19%
21 to 30 Days	10	24%
31 to 40 Days	10	24%
41 to 50 Da	3	7%
Over 50 Days	7	17%
Total Cases	42	101%

Note: Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

Two types of resolution measure are presented in Tables 10 to 12: resolution of issues and resolution of overall case. Table 10 lists all issues that were involved in the 42 FPMP cases to date and describes the frequency and timing (whether in the first meeting) of their resolution. Overall, 90% of all issues (179/198) were resolved; furthermore, 84% of all issues (166/198) were resolved in one meeting.

Table 11 summarizes the data from Table 10 to show the quantum and resolution rate of six issue categories. Although resolution rates are high for all categories, issues related to behaviour/ parenting and communication appear more difficult to resolve. Nonetheless, it is clear that overall, the FPMP process has been able to resolve a wide range of protection issues with considerable success.

The second measure of resolution is resolution of the overall case. FPMP's outcomes for cases with removals up to Feb 28/02 are shown in Table 12. Overall, the rate of complete case resolution has been 79%. Three of the 9 cases in which some or no issues were resolved nonetheless involved a written agreement that could alleviate some tensions and help the case to progress. A follow-up analysis of these cases will only be possible in the final evaluation report.

Table 10: Frequency of Occurrence and Resolution of Issues In Planning Meetings

Issue Description	# of Cases In Which Issue Exists	% of Total Cases (N=42)	# of Cases in Which Issue Resolved	% of Cases In Which Issue Resolved	# of These Cases in Which Issue Resolved in First Meeting	% of These Cases in Which Issue Resolved in First Meeting
ACCESS ISSUES						
Access to Child by Mother	22	52%	20	91%	19	95%
Access to Child by Father	15	36%	14	93%	13	93%
Access to Child by other Family Members	6	14%	6	100%	6	100%
Access to Child by Foster Family	2	5%	2	100%	2	100%
Supervised Access of Child	11	26%	10	91%	8	80%
Other Access Issues	9	21%	8	89%	8	100%
BEHAVIOUR & PARENTING ISSUES						
Behaviour of Mother with Child	5	12%	3	60%	3	100%
Behaviour of Father with Child	6	14%	5	83%	5	100%
Quality of Care for Child	4	10%	4	100%	3	75%
Other Parenting Issues	6	14%	5	83%	4	80%
Co-Parenting Plan	1	2%	1	100%	1	100%
Behaviour of the Child while with Parent	2	5%	1	50%	1	100%
COMMUNICATION ISSUES						
Communication between Parent(s) and Child	9	21%	7	78%	7	100%
Communication Between Family and Ministry	12	29%	9	75%	8	89%
Communication Between Natural Parents / Foster Parents / Child	5	12%	5	100%	4	80%
Other Communication Issues	5	12%	4	80%	3	75%

Issue Description	# of Cases In Which Issue Exists	% of Total Cases (N=43)	# of Cases in Which Issue Resolved	% of Cases In Which Issue Resolved	# of These Cases in Which Issue Resolved in First Meeting	% of These Cases in Which Issue Resolved in First Meeting
RESIDENCE ISSUES						
Where / with whom the Child will Reside While in the Care of the Ministry	7	17%	7	100%	7	100%
Where / with whom the Child will Reside if Not in the Care of the Ministry	5	12%	5	100%	5	100%
Other Residence Issues	4	10%	4	100%	3	75%
SERVICES / RESOURCES ISSUES						
Services / Resources the Child will have access to	6	14%	6	100%	5	83%
Services / Resources the Parents / Family will have access to	19	45%	18	95%	17	94%
Other Service / Resource Issues	6	14%	6	100%	6	100%
RETURN OF CHILD ISSUES						
Terms and Conditions under which a Child will be Returned	14	33%	14	100%	14	100%
Terms and Conditions under which a Child will be Returned Under Supervision of the Director	13	31%	11	85%	10	91%
Other Returning The Child Issues	4	10%	4	100%	4	100%

Notes: Total number of issues in the 42 cases :198
Total number of issues resolved: 179
Total number of issues resolved in first meeting: 166
Percentage of total issues resolved : 90%
Percentage of total issues resolved in first meeting: 84%

Table 11 Resolution of Issues by General Category

Category of Issue	# of Issues in this Category in 42 Cases	# of These Issues Resolved	Resolution Rate as a %
Access	65	60	92%
Behaviour and Parenting	24	19	79%
Communication	31	25	81%
Residence	16	16	100%
Services / Resources	31	30	97%
Return of Child	31	29	94%

Table 12: Case Resolution

Degree of Resolution	# of Cases	% of Cases
Cases in which all issues were resolved	33	79%
Cases in which some issues resolved	6	14%
Cases in which no issues resolved	3	7%
	42	100%

5.0 SATISFACTION OF PARTIES WITH FPMP PROCESSES

Table 13 presents satisfaction outcomes for all respondents interviewed using the questionnaire shown in Appendix 1. As noted in section 2.2, 27 individuals in four respondent groups (parents, social workers, lawyers and judges) were part of this survey. The overall satisfaction rating of FPMP averaged 6.2 on a 7 point scale, where 1= very dissatisfied and 7= very satisfied. There was a strong continuity of response between all respondent groups. Overall, although average ratings for all respondent groups were high, the highest rating (6.8) was for the respect shown by mediators to the participating parties, while the lowest average rating (5.6) was for the speed with which parties were brought together to address issues. Analysis of qualitative comments on each of the aspects rated is provided below.

Table 13: Satisfaction of Parties With Aspects of FPMP Process

Aspect Rated	Number of Respondents	Average Rating on 7 point scale 1= very dissatisfied 7= very satisfied	Range of Responses
1. Speed with which the appropriate parties were brought together to address issues.	25 (NA=2)	5.6	1-7
2. FPMP's success in reaching appropriate outcomes.	27	5.9	3-7
3. The opportunity FPMP affords parties to be heard.	26 (NA=1)	6.2	2-7
4. Respect shown by the mediator to parties.	26 (NA-1)	6.8	6-7
5. Ability of the FPMP to determine the best interests of the child.	24 (NA=3)	5.8	3-7
6. Ability of the project to facilitate a family's access to necessary resources.	19 (NA=8)	5.9	4-7
7. Overall satisfaction with the FPMP.	26 (NA=1)	6.2	4-7

Notes: Average parent rating for all items = 6.2
Average social worker rating for all items = 6.1
Average lawyer rating for all items = 6.0

5.1 Speed with which Parties Brought Together

The perception of the speed with which FPMP was able to bring parties together was generally very positive; all but three of 25 respondents assessed the speed at 5 or better on the 7 point scale. Dissatisfaction of two respondents was related to specific problems that emerged in particular cases to delay the mediation. However, as one respondent noted, in relation to a court based process that can take 8 to 12 months to reach a decision, the FPMP record is outstanding.

Two respondents note that as the volume of referrals has increased, the speed with which mediation meetings can be held has decreased. The primary limitation is that insofar as the Court Work Supervisor is a key part both of the orientation session with the social worker and of the planning meeting, plus has a number of other key functions such as attendance at court on Thursdays to review cases for possible referral, there is a natural limit to the number of meetings that one person can accommodate. Other factors affecting scheduling are:

- parents are often difficult to contact (in some cases they do not have phones)
- lawyers' schedules are frequently difficult to accommodate

- social workers' commitments are also extensive
- as noted in section 4.4 planning meetings involve on average 5.4 participants. The more people involved, the more difficult scheduling becomes.
- there is no assigned space for planning meetings, so they have to be booked anew for each case.

Currently, the maximum number of cases that can be scheduled in one month is 11. As of June 6, 2002 the earliest scheduling of cases possible was the last week of July, or 6 weeks from referral. Thus whereas up to Feb 28, 2002 77% of FPMP cases were resolved in less than 40 days, this period of time is likely to become the minimum time in the future, unless this issue can be addressed.

5.2 The Results of the Process

Satisfaction with mediation results ratings was high, with only two respondents rating their satisfaction less than 5 on the 7 point scale. The single major criticism was that the follow-up by a social worker to the mediation was slow because of illness.

It should be noted that although lawyer and social worker respondents were involved in the nine cases where none or only some of the issues were resolved, all parent respondents were from cases that were fully resolved. Thus from a parentpe rspective, one could have expected a slightly greater dissatisfaction with case results had the sample included, more representatively, two parents from unresolved cases. More deliberative sampling of this group of cases will be undertaken for the final evaluation report.

5.3 Opportunity for Parties to be Heard

The opportunity for all parties to be heard was seen by almost all parties as one of the primary strengths of the FPMP process. Several factors were noted by various respondents as comprising this opportunity:

- The separate orientation sessions prior to the planning meeting allowed each party to express themselves fully, and in an unpressured interaction, consider & discuss their own and the other party's positions without being defensive.
- The simple factor of having a substantial amount of time to thrash out all the issues in the planning meeting(s) (which, as noted in section 4.4, Table 8, averaged 5 hours).
- An atmosphere which, compared to court processes, felt less formal and more respectful to participants. As one parent stated "I felt I was important for the first time. People were listening, paying attention, really trying to make it work for us." Notwithstanding the generally positive response, one parent felt intimidated by the large number of people in the meeting, and another felt that particular circumstances made it difficult to fully discuss all concerns.
- Although a re-hashing of the events which precipitated the Ministry's decision to remove a child was generally not on the table, social workers were expected to provide justification or reasons for any specific requirements or expectations they had of parents. This gave most parents a sense that their concerns about the requirements could be heard, adjustments could be made, and a collaborative approach was possible.
- There were opportunities for breaks in the planning meeting if the situation was becoming excessively emotional.

5.4 Respect Shown to Parties by the Mediator

Without exception, respondents had high praise for the mediators. No one rated this item at less than 6 on the 7 point scale. Typical judgements were "excellent", "very professional", "respectful to all"," lots of assurance and support given", "made me feel comfortable"," good listener"," not judgmental", "was neutral" and "very courteous".

5.5 Consideration Given to the Best Interests of the Child

Again, ratings were generally positive, with only two respondents rating this item less than 5 on the 7 point scale. Respondents almost always felt that the central purpose and focus of the meeting was the best interests of the child. Two parents felt that insufficient consideration was given to the impacts of the ex-spouse on the child and the necessity to keep the ex-spouse out of their lives.

5.6 Ability to Connect Resources to Parent(s) or Child(ren)

There were fewer respondents for this item, either because resources were not an issue, or because FPMP was not seen as a vehicle to free up resources. This latter perception is correct, insofar as FPMP can't produce resources that are not available, or help parents jump queues for resources.

However, the FPMP process is seen as a good mechanism for identifying resources that are needed in the particular instance, helping parties reach agreement on the need for the resources, making the necessary decision (via a written agreement) to access the resource, and having the authority to approve or gain approval for the resource quickly. Several respondents noted that calls were made during the planning meeting to confirm the availability of resources.

A few respondents commented that waitlists prevented immediate access to resources, or that it was important to have more knowledge of resources for special groups (e.g. linguistic minorities).

5.7 Overall Satisfaction With FPMP Process

The overall satisfaction with the FPMP process is very high, with only 1 respondent rating the process lower than 5 on the 7 point scale.

Apart from comments that have been identified in relation to the previous ratings (e.g. opportunity to be heard, opportunity to spend significant time to problem-solve) positive comments centered on:

- The opportunity to discuss issues in a problem-solving, collaborative manner rather than an adversarial one.
- The fact that not just the parent, but also the Ministry (via the social worker) is held accountable for their positions and actions.
- The opportunity for social workers to be educated about new ways of relating to clients.

Critical comments, already identified in early sections, related to difficulty for a parent to feel confident about "opening up" in the planning meeting, or to understand aspects of the discussion, or to secure follow-through by the social worker after the meeting.

5.8 Relationship Between Parent(s) and Social Worker

Parents were asked to compare the contacts they had with the social worker in the FPMP process with other contacts they had had with social workers in a problem situation. Of nine parents who felt they could answer, four felt the contacts were about the same, two "more positive", and three "much more positive". None felt the relationship was worse.

Of those who felt the relationship was the same, three described negative interactions, and one positive. Of those who detected a more positive relationship because of FPMP, the commonalities were the social worker's willingness to listen, to treat the parents respectfully, and to defend and explain her (the social worker's) position "rather than just laying down the rules".

Of the nine social workers who answered a similar question, three felt the relationship with their client was the same as in other situations (one negative and two essentially positive), five felt it was more positive, and one "much more positive." The main reason for feeling the relationship was more positive related to the ability to achieve mutual understanding and trust with the client, to be able to offer added support to the client, and to reach a quick agreement.

5.9 Impact of FPMP On Case Conferences and Protection Hearings

5.9.1 Case Conferences

If all issues are not fully resolved in the planning meetings, the case will revert to the courts. This may involve a case conference. Respondents were asked whether in these instances the planning meeting had helped narrow or simplify issues.

Of four respondents with experience of FPMP cases that subsequently went to case conferences, three felt the FPMP process had significantly simplified and clarified issues, and one felt that the mental health status of the parent precluded any easy resolution (Note: It is not possible at this point to determine whether the respondents were talking about the same or different cases). The main advantage in the three cases was that the FPMP process helped establish a positive relationship between the social worker and parents and greater understanding of what was feasible and what was not. Although these respondents indicated that the case conferences in the three cases were able to resolve the matter without trial, the final evaluation reportwil I present a systematic follow-up of all unresolved FPMP cases to determine the frequency with which this outcome occurs.

5.9.2 Protection Hearings

Unresolved FPMP cases may end up in a protection hearing. As noted in the previous section, follow-up data are not available for FPMP cases at this point, but four respondents felt they could comment on the impacts of cases which had gone through the FPMP process, but were not resolved. As with case conferences, we are not able to determine if they were talking about the same or different cases.

Two respondents felt the FPMP cases took less time in the protection hearing than non-FPMP cases, one the same time, and one more time. The two who responded "less time" felt that the FPMP process had resulted in better communication between parents and social worker. The two respondents who felt the protection hearing took the same or longer time stated that even if the parties are more respectful in their relationship, if the mediation has not been successful they may be more entrenched in their positions. As one respondent pointed out, "The Ministry must put forward all of its evidence to meet the burden of proof, and parents fight everything at this point."

5.10 Respondents' General Comments on the FPMP Process

All respondents contributed numerous thoughtful comments about the FPMP process. Comments that were frequently stated include the following:

- General laudatory observations about the overall experience, many of which reiterate positive ratings reported above. For example:" fantastic";" loved the process";" great process"; "have not heard one negative comment about FPMP"; "astounded by the excellent results"; "hope it becomes standard practice".
- FPMP as a cost-saving initiative. For example: "The resources spent on mediation are between one third and one tenth the cost of going to court"; "Mediation is the most effective use of resources and money that I have ever seen in 26 years of working in child protection"; "Mediation takes 8 hours up front, but that can save days of court time and thousands ofdo llars, not to mention the benefit of early resolution for the children".
- Positive role of the Court Work Supervisor. For example: "awesome"; "coordinated well, kept everything moving"; "having her right there in court to set up the mediation and resources has been excellent"; "(she is) well trained, skillful, non-judgement, understanding and highly respectful of people"; "her approach is to avoid fighting or nit-picking and to look directly at the children – she recognizes the need to help families and the need for resources to implement the mediated settlement"; "New social workers need to be

supported during the process. Decisions can be made very quickly and new workers can feel insecure about how to respond."

Other comments, usually by one or two respondents, involved criticism of specific cases and/or made recommendations:

- more breaks should be scheduled during the mediations.
- if there is no resolution within three hours, then they should "call it quits"; set mediation in two categories 1) entrenched contested (1 day), and 2) simpler cases (half a day).
- to save time, do agreement by hand rather than typewritten.
- do more education of social workers and lawyers about the mediation process.
- have a more neutral setting for the mediation.
- handouts (on each party's position) should be distributed before the mediation for discussion and disclosure.
- criticism of the Ministry for reversing an agreement that had been made in a planning meeting.[2]
- criticism that in some instances both mediation time and court time were scheduled for the same case; this does not save time, and can delay other possible court cases.
- criticism of lawyers who insist on a court date, even if agreement was fully reached in the planning meeting; concern that the Legal Aid tariff should allow for more preparation time for lawyers participating in FPMP.
- mediation should be made mandatory for permanent orders or whenever a child is going into care for the first time.
- two parents were critical of the lack of social worker follow-up on agreements.

[2] This occurred in one case and was an anomaly. Further inquiry about this case revealed that staff turnover and workload issues were factors. There would normally be no expectation that either party would amend terms and conditions negotiated in a planning meeting.

6.0 OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE MEDIATION PROCESS

This concluding section focuses on themes that were addressed in the five mediator interviews, an interview with the Court Work Supervisor, and with Director's Counsel for the Guildford, Langley and Whiterock MCFD offices. The primary intent of these interviews was to identify themes that relate to the effectiveness, uniqueness, or simply the importance of specific features of the process. An understanding of these themes is felt to be important if the FPMP model is being considered for application elsewhere in BC or in other jurisdictions.

6.1 Length of Planning Meeting

During the planning stages of the FPMP, the expectation was that planning meetings would take approximately 2 hours. As reported in section 4.4, the average has been slightly over 5 hours. This raises the issue of whether there are cost savings involved, as court hearings for an interim order under section 35 of the CFCSA are usually allotted 2.5 hours. However, in the majority of mediations, the process is used not only to resolve issues that would be part of a Section 35 order, but also to resolve the ultimate issues that would be part of a protection hearing and a temporary protection order. A temporary order can involve from 2-6 days, depending on the complexity of issues and number of witnesses involved. Trials for continuing orders can last 10-15 days. The Court Work Supervisor noted one case in which a consent order was obtained through mediation which would otherwise have involved approximately 15 trial days. Thus even if the planning meeting is over twice as long on average as anticipated, this greater time is unlikely to prove non-cost effective in comparison with the court process. A more substantial analysis will be made in the evaluation report in early 2003.

Notwithstanding these observations, mediators were asked to comment on factors which impact the length of the planning meetings, and ways in which it can be made shorter. Factors which are seen to make this type of mediation longer are:

- the focus is not just on conditions for the return of a child, but on building a parenting plan.
- there tends to be more sets of relationships and dynamics than in many mediation processes – e.g. between parent and social worker, between parent and parent, between parent and counsel, between Court Work Supervisor and social worker, between counsel and social worker, etc. While having all players at the table is a major strength in this process, it means that meetings take more time.
- the agreements tend to be very detailed and unique to each case. Detailed agreements are seen to raise the level of trust and security on both sides because they give clarity about what is expected. For example, a phrase such as "safe environment for the child" is meaningless to a parent if the social worker has not expressed in exact terms what actions will make the environment safe, or what situations need to be avoided. More detailed specifications also make any subsequent court processes (if necessary) more efficient because it is clearer if a condition has or has not been implemented. Since the conditions are unique to each case, they cannot be "drawn down" from a master list of possible conditions, and therefore take longer to negotiate and develop.
- parents frequently are living apart, so the development of a plan can involve communication and access issues.
- Some participants lack functional literacy skills, may have difficulty understanding processes, and/or have cognitive impairments. Documents frequently have to be read to them.

Suggestions for reducing planning meeting time included:

- as mediators gain experience with this type of mediation they will likely be able to use time more effectively and keep parties on track.
- as social workers have more experience with FPMP, they will anticipate what is required and contribute more effectively to time management.

- present a written summary of issues at the beginning of the planning meeting (developed from the orientation session) rather then have parties state their own (it appears that most mediators follow this practice in any event).
- (in contrast to the previous point) lessening information overload, so that the session does not get bogged down in explanations and thereby lose momentum.
- avoiding excessive use of caucusing.

While mediators seemed confident that there can be some reduction in time, a 2 hour meeting was definitely seen as an unrealistic target. Furthermore, one mediator noted that the quality and durability of an agreement made in three hours may be quite different to that made in seven hours.

6.2 Orientation Sessions

Mediators feel the orientation sessions are critical to the success of the mediation. The mediators usually prefer to begin with the social worker meeting, which is always held together with the Court Work Supervisor. The key thrust of the meetings tends to be to get the social worker to step back from what they have been doing. Apprehensions usually take place in a crisis atmosphere when something has happened and parents have acted in a specific way. The mediator helps the social worker to reframe, assess the concerns and issues in the present, work towards specific requirements, and to think creatively.

With parents the process is parallel. The mediator helps them to move away from past events and concerns (usually whether the children should have been removed in the first place) in order to focus on what the parent feels is legitimate in the Ministry's concerns and how they are prepared to address these concerns. This also includes helping them identify what support they might need as parents for their children's well-being, totally apart from the Ministry's concerns. This process is not just one of developing a checklist of concerns, but of building support and trust. Elements of this process include:

- being clear about what is not on the table (i.e. re-hashing the original apprehension).
- clarifying that the mediator is not a Ministry representative.
- assuring them that they will have a full opportunity to state their concerns and needs in the planning meeting.
- not being judgmental. If the mediator does not express judgements, the parent is more likely to talk about drugs, alcohol or other worries they have about their lives or those of their children. These are issues that the Ministry is also worried about. If the parent reaches this point of acknowledgment, the mediator is more likely able to build a collaborative relationship between parent and social worker to jointly address the issues.

6.3 Role of the Court Work Supervisor

As noted in section 5, strong appreciation was expressed for the role played by the Court Work Supervisor. The role is seen as an essential component in the FPMP process. There is concern that if the model is considered for replication elsewhere, the features that are central to the role should be fully understood. These include:

- The role is dedicated specifically to the task of child protection mediation.
  One mediator contrasted the role of the Court Work Supervisor in the FPMP context with that of supervisors in Section 22 mediations. In Section 22 mediations where a supervisor is present, their role in the mediation is peripheral to their main tasks. They often have scheduling problems, and urgent matters that tug at their time and might even pull them out of the meeting. The supervisor is often just as new to the mediation process as the social worker. In the FPMP role, the Court Work Supervisor devotes all her time to FPMP cases, has the authority to make decisions about resources, and can act as a mentor or "process interpreter" to the social worker.

- The orientation of the role is collaborative rather than adversarial.
  In an adversarial situation, clients tend to avoid contact with the social worker, not return calls, or even become threatening and intimidating to the social worker. If a collaborative approach is used, clients are more likely to talk about their own or their children's problems or behaviours, identify ways in which a service may not be helping them, maintain regular contact and work with the social worker to revise plans for care. The essential elements of a collaborative approach are non-confrontational communication, inclusion of affected parties, respect to the client, and good listening skills.

- An experienced worker
  The role of the Court Work Supervisor involves -- implicitly or explicitly – a significant degree of modeling and mentoring. The experience of the Court Work Supervisor helps relieve the emotional burden many younger workers feel, especially when involved in a mediation process for the first time, and permits the worker to feel safe in exploring a non-adversarial, non-defensive approach. Traditionally a protection social worker "gathers information" (from parents, neighbors, etc) and then makes a risk evaluation and takes a certain action. This is quite a different process from sitting down and planning collaboratively with a parent. The Court Work Supervisor gives the social worker latitude to change her mind and consider alternative solutions.

- Knowledge about and authority to approve services
  One mediator pointed out that clauses in Section 22 mediation agreements concerning services often are phrased in terms of "if available." In the FPMP the Court Work Supervisor is fully knowledgeable about services. She will routinely check on the availability of a service following an orientation session, or if a new need is identified in the planning meeting, will check on and authorize it during a mediation session. In this way, parents (and social workers) can have confidence that a service will be in place, the mediation process can maintain momentum, and the agreement can be specific.

- Clarity about the mediator's and the Court Work Supervisor's roles
  One mediator felt that the Court Work Supervisor "actively" avoids interfering with the mediator's role. The mediator's role is to run each orientation session and the planning meeting, including who attends and when a meeting is needed. The Court Work Supervisor's role in these meetings is to make decisions, together with the social worker, about what can be proposed or done in any given instance.

6.4 Caucusing

There are different orientations between the mediators aboutth e role of caucusing. Some characterize its use as somewhat more central than in other forms of mediation, primarily to help de-escalate emotions, but also to constituency-build because may parties are involved. Typical consultation that might occur would be between a lawyer and client, the Court Work Supervisor and social worker, and/or between two parents.

Others use it less than, for example, small claims, human rights, insurance or other commercial mediations. They feel that the orientation sessions already have established the interests of parties. Furthermore, one mediator noted that unlike a mediation process that is geared towards a "one time" settlement, child protection mediation is quintessentially about improving communication, developing a collaborative approach and building trust. This mediator felt that for this reason direct communication should be nurtured within the meeting with all parties present.

All mediators distinguished between breaks, which don't necessarily involve interaction between a mediator and the party, and caucusing, which usually does. Smoke and lunch breaks are necessary in the relatively lengthy FPMP meetings. One mediator emphasized that if a client required a smoke break and the mediator was going to use the opportunity to talk to the social worker, she would explicitly tell the parent of her intentions and say she would debrief with the parent on his/her return. The transparency of all interactions is thus maintained and reinforced.

6.5 Directiveness

Mediators were asked if they needed to be more directive than in other types of mediation. Instances when this was considered to occur were:

- Summarizing results of orientation session
  In other types of mediation, mediators often let the parties make opening statements, but in the FPMP process the mediator usually summarizes the results of the orientation sessions him/herself. This serves several functions, including saving time, letting parties know their concerns and issues have been "heard", tidying up language for clients who might otherwise start off in an awkward or brusque way, and establishing commonalties of approach between parties (e.g. "You all have made it clear you would like to see the child back in the care of his parent")

- Encouraging the social worker to be more clear about requirements (see comments about detailed agreements in section 6.1). At the same time, one mediator expressed the conviction that the mediation should not simply be seen as a vehicle for a consent order.

- De-escalating emotions
  Mediators at times have had to caucus with a parent to make clear that threatening behaviour would not be accepted and would be counter-productive.

6.6 Adjustments for Literacy or Cognitive Dysfunction

Several mediators noted adjustments they make for persons who appear to have cognitive impairments or functional literacy problems. Their approach includes reading agreements aloud (preferably in private to save the client embarrassment), speaking more slowly, using plain language, and using diagrams to explain points (e.g. to clarify access arrangements when several parties' schedules are involved).

6.7 Confidentiality

While all mediators agreed that the preservation of confidentiality is an issue that needs to be made explicit in the planning meeting, there was less agreement on the specific issue of the management of social worker notes taken in the meeting. One viewpoint was that such notes should be destroyed at the end of the meeting - perhaps even in a ritualistic way - and that they should not become part of the social worker's file. The counter viewpoint was that notes may contain positive information which can benefit the client, that file information derived from the meeting should always be marked confidential, and that it gives a false sense of security for a client to imply that there is no way for information to emerge in a subsequent court appearance withoutre ference to things said in a planning meeting. This issue needs clearer definition with reference both to social work and mediation practice.

APPENDIX 1:
KEY RESPONDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

FACILITATED PLANNING MEETING PROJECT

Key Respondent Questionnaire

SATISFACTION WITH FACILITATED PLANNING MEETING PROJE CT (FPMP)

Version 1: For lawyers, social workers, and judges only. See next page for parent version

Please indicate your satisfaction with the aspects of the Facilitated Planning Meeting Project listed below, and briefly explain the reason for your rating. Rate your satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 7 by checking the appropriate box.

Aspect of FPMP Rated	I am unable to rate this item (check if applicable)	Very dissatisfied ←						→ Very satisfied
1. The speed with which the appropriate parties can be brought together to address issues.	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
2. The FPMP's success in reaching appropriate outcomes.	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
3. The opportunity FPMP affords parties to be heard.	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
4. The respect shown by the mediator to all parties.	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
5. The ability of the project to determine the best interests of the child.	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
6. The ability of the project to facilitate a family's access to necessary resources	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
7. Your overall satisfaction with the FPMP	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								

SATISFACTION WITH FACILITATED PLANNING MEETING PROJECT (FPMP)

Version 2: For parents only

How satisfied were you with the following things about the overall mediation process.? Rate your satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is "very dissatisfied"an d 7 is "very satisfied"

Aspect of FPMP Rated	I am unable to rate this item (check if applicable)	Very dissatisfied ←						Very satisfied →
1. How quickly they brought everybody together to discuss the issues and try to work out a solution.	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
2. The actual results (outcome) of the process	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
3. How much you were given the opportunity to be heard (to give your points of view, to talk about your concerns)	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
4. The respect shown to you by the mediator	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
5. How well the process considered the best interests of (your) child(ren) (or give names of children).	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
6. How well the process helped to connect you up with resources that you or your child(ren) needed to make the agreement work	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								
7. Your overall satisfaction with the process (project)	❑	❑ 1	❑ 2	❑ 3	❑ 4	❑ 5	❑ 6	❑ 7
Reasons for rating:_____								

IMPACT ON PARENT – SOCIAL WORKER RELATIONSHIP

8. (For parents only). How would you describe the contacts you have had with your social worker in this process compared to other contacts with social workers when you've had to work through some sort of problem? (Note: these "problems" should usually refer to previous protection matters.)

- ❑ FPMP contacts much more negative
- ❑ FPMP contacts more negative
- ❑ FPMP contacts about the same
- ❑ FPMP contacts more positive
- ❑ FPMP contacts much more positive
- ❑ Not applicable / can't compare/not had to work through other problems

8.1 In what way have they been more positive or negative? (Also probe ways in which they have been the same, if applicable)

_____

_____

_____

9. (For social workers only). How would you characterize the relationship you have had with parents in the FPMP process compared to relationships you have had with parents in other situations where you've had to work through some sort of problem?

- ❑ FPMP relationship much more negative
- ❑ FPMP relationship more negative
- ❑ FPMP relationship about the same
- ❑ FPMP relationship more positive
- ❑ FPMP relationship much more positive

9.1 In what way has the relationship been more positive or negative? (Also probe ways in which they have been the same, if applicable.)

_____

_____

_____

IMPACT ON CASE CONFERENCE

(Note: Questions 10-12 are for judges, social workers and lawyers only. Screen these questions by asking whether they have been involved in an FPMP case that has gone to a case conference. If not, go to question #14)

10. In situations where a facilitated planning meeting has been held but the case still goes to a case conference, do the planning meetings help to narrow or simplify issues?

❑ no ❑ yes

10.1 (If "yes") Please characterize the ways in which they are narrowed or simplified. (e.g., Are there typical issues that get resolved?)

_____

_____

_____

11. Do case conferences of unresolved FPMP cases involve more "difficult" cases than non-FPMP cases?

❑ no ❑ yes

11.1 (If "yes") In what way can they be characterized as more difficult? (e.g., Is it because of the parties, the issues or both?)

_____

_____

_____

12. Please describe any other impacts the FPMP has had on case conferences, regardless of whether or not cases were resolved by the FPMP.

_____

_____

_____

IMPACT ON SUBSEQUENT HEARINGS OF UNRESOLVED FPMP CASES

(Note: Question 13 is for judges, social workers and lawyers)

13. In general, would you say that protection hearings of unresolved FPMP cases take more time, less time or the same amount of time as non-FPMP cases?

- ❑ less time
- ❑ same amount of time
- ❑ more time

13.1 (If "less time" or "more time") Why do you think this is the case?

_____

_____

_____

OTHER COMMENTS

(Note: Question 14 is for all respondents)

14. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the role and impacts of the FPMP, and/or recommendations you would like to make for its improvement?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX 2: MEDIATOR INTERVIEW THEME GUIDE

1. Time factors to shorten planning meeting and/or orientation session
2. Value of orientation sessions
3. Difference between FPMP and Section 22 mediations
4. Need for directiveness
5. Use of conference calls
6. Role of Court Work Supervisor
7. Role of caucusing
8. Issues around literacy / comprehension
9. Issues around confidentiality
10. Issues around participation of children